

wearing the same uniform was a vital necessity to the success of the Marine Corps mission, there was even more of a need for white Marines wearing that uniform to understand and accept the changing social order.

Action Against Discrimination

In June 1962, President John F. Kennedy appointed a President's Committee on Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces headed by Gerhard A. Gesell, a prominent Washington attorney active in civil rights cases, with Nathaniel S. Colley, Abe Fortas, Louis J. Hector, Benjamin Muse, John S. Sengstacke, and Whitney M. Young, Jr. as members. The Gesell Committee's purpose was to investigate the status of minority groups, especially blacks, in the services and to see what progress had been made in the 14 years since President Truman had decreed the end of segregation in the Armed Forces. At virtually the same time, the Civil Rights Commission, through the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower), requested Armed Forces cooperation in a study examining the status of blacks in uniform with respect to racial discrimination.⁵ The resultant self examination by the Marine Corps did not turn up a completely clean bill of health, but it did show that many things had changed and for the better for black Marines. There were, however, signs in the summer of 1962 of restrictions in assignment practices; for instance, there were no black recruiters, no black women Marines at Parris Island, and there were several posts where blacks were not assigned because of off-base housing difficulties, among them Bridgeport, California; Charleston, South Carolina; and Hawthorne, Nevada.⁶ The Gesell Committee found that: "Many of the Negroes in the Navy and Marine Corps are still grouped in assignments which perpetuate the image of the Negro as a menial or servant in respect to the total activities of these Services. . . ." ⁷

In general, however, the initial report of the committee was complimentary of the efforts of the Armed Forces toward integration and equality. President Kennedy sent the report of Secretary of Defense Robert S. MacNamara on 21 June 1963 enjoining him to give it his "personal attention and action." The committee suggested measures to improve the effectiveness of current policies in the Armed Forces regarding equality of treatment and opportu-



Major Hurdle L. Maxwell, later the first black officer to command a Marine infantry battalion, visits a Vietnamese village in 1966. (USMC photo A419047).

nity. The Armed Forces were called upon to review their standards periodically "for promotion, selection, and assignment to make certain that latent ability is always properly measured and utilized."⁸ Specific suggestions for better communication between commanding officers and their black personnel were made as well as suggestions for improving race relations on military bases.

Most strongly, the committee called for "a vigorous new program of action" to eliminate the "humiliation and degradation" suffered by black servicemen and their dependents in communities near the bases where they were required to serve. In regard to off-base housing, the report noted that: "Bad as the situation is for all personnel, it is much worse for Negroes who face discrimination in housing throughout the United States."⁹ The formation of bi-racial community committees was encouraged to direct attention and offer solutions to problems of housing, transportation, education, recreational facilities, and community events, programs, and activities.

As an example, in Jacksonville, North Carolina, even before the Gesell Committee reported, Major General James P. Berkeley, commanding Camp Lejeune, and Colonel

Ernest C. Fuson, commanding the air facility at New River, had visited the mayor to inform him of the desire of the Secretary of the Navy that the city authorities "proceed in an orderly manner toward obtaining integration of all public and private facilities within the City of Jacksonville."¹⁰ A mayor's bi-racial committee was formed and the help of influential businessmen and clergymen was solicited. By July 1963, Major General Alpha L. Bowser, the new Camp Lejeune commander, could report to General Berkeley that all the city's movie theaters were integrated as were restaurants and taverns.¹¹

The power of commanding officers to restrict the offbase activities of military personnel undoubtedly accelerated the progress of integration in Jacksonville and in other similar cities and towns adjacent to military posts. Secretary MacNamara reinforced that power on 26 July 1963 with a directive which authorized the establishment of the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civil Rights) and ordered the Services to use their authority to designate places "off limits" in combating discrimination.¹² The progressive enforcement of this policy was eventually to lead Secretary MacNamara to announce, on 7 September 1967, that the Department of Defense would declare "off limits" all segregated housing located near military installations throughout the United States.¹³

In another area of discrimination, public events, the Marine Corps took steps to curtail military participation and support of segregated activities. In a bulletin issued on 12 November 1963, commanding officers were directed to permit participation "only if the event was available to all persons without regard to race, creed, color or national origin."¹⁴ In July 1964, the Secretary of the Navy issued a directive which further elaborated on military participation in public meetings which practised segregation or exclusion. The general policy stated was that: "The Department of Defense will not sponsor, support, or financially assist, directly or indirectly, any conference or meeting held under circumstances where participants are segregated or treated unequally because of race."¹⁵

Despite the various orders and directives enjoining discrimination both on and off base, there was a strong feeling among younger black Marines in the 60s that they were being discriminated against, particularly in the areas



Second Lieutenant Gloria Smith at her first duty station, Camp Pendleton in 1968. A captain in 1973, she was the senior black woman officer on active duty. (USMC Photo A557862).

of promotion, job assignment, and military justice. With only a handful of black officers and these mainly lieutenants and captains, there was almost a certainty that if a black got in trouble his judge would be white and if someone decided on his preference or performance of duty that person also would be white. If the decisions made were contrary to what the black Marine desired or thought he deserved, the accusation of racial prejudice came naturally to his mind. In this respect, he had the reinforcement of his own peer group of black Marines. It was quite easy to dismiss matters of comparative qualifications, needs of the service, and even responsibility for misdeeds in this atmosphere. More and more, some young black Marines tended to draw in upon themselves, to develop a brotherhood of racial pride, and to consider white Marines as inherently prejudiced against them. While white Marines for the most part, influenced by official directives and the outward evidences of desegregation and action against discrimination, considered that there was no racial inequality in the Marine Corps, many black Marines were not convinced.

Racial Turmoil

The 1960s was a period of increasing racial tension in the United States marked by a series of sit-ins, demonstrations, protest marches, and even riots as blacks strove to achieve the

civil rights that long overdue laws and court decisions had given them. In many instances, the riotous confrontations were "generated," as the National Advisory Committee on Civil Disorders found, "out of an increasingly disturbed social atmosphere, in which typically a series of tension-heightening incidents over a period of weeks or months became linked in the minds of many in the Negro community with a reservoir of underlying grievances."¹⁶ The typical rioter was identified as a teenager or young adult, "proud of his race, extremely hostile to both whites and middle-class Negroes, and although informed about politics, highly distrustful of the political system."¹⁷ Consider then that many men with this orientation were enlisted or drafted into the Marine Corps in the 1960s.

The stress and strains of American civilian society showed in the Birmingham, Alabama bus boycotts (1955-56) and in the confrontations over the educational rights of blacks at Little Rock, Arkansas (1957-58) and Oxford, Mississippi (1962-63). More serious incidents than these confrontations were riots in Philadelphia (1964), Watts (Los Angeles) (1965), and Detroit (1967). The year 1968 was a particularly bad year for violence with anti-establishment attitudes playing a significant part. A major incident was the assassination on 4 April in Memphis, Tennessee of Dr. Martin Luther King, the head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The resulting tumultuous riots in Washington, Chicago, Los Angeles, and many other cities were marked by arson, looting, and loss of life.

This series of disturbances had its effect upon the Marine Corps also, which had a parallel rash of racially inspired confrontations of varying seriousness. In August 1968, Headquarters Marine Corps began compiling briefs on incidents within the Corps which might be considered as being basically racial.¹⁸

As one reviews these incidents, certain characteristics or patterns are observed. The locations were widespread—Vietnam, Okinawa, Japan, Hawaii, and various bases in the United States. Racial epithets were frequently "trigger words" for assaults. Many of the confrontations were between groups or gangs of 25-50 each. Sides were chosen on the basis of race with little apparent regard for the actual triggering incident itself. Many incidents were the result of gangs picking on individuals. Clubs and places of recreation were frequently the scenes of inciting episodes and drinking by

one or more of the participants increased their belligerency accordingly.

Camp Lejeune became a focal point of concern about racial incidents in 1969, although it was by no means the only base where such incidents occurred. In the first eight months of the year, there were 160 reports of assaults, muggings, and robbery with racial overtones.¹⁹ Major General Michael P. Ryan, commanding the 2d Marine Division stationed at the base, addressed himself to the problem on 9 April 1969 by forming a committee of seven officers to develop a paper on "the division's basic philosophy in addressing any minority group or discrimination problem . . . within the division." After an informal and limited exploration, a report was submitted on 23 April which made certain fairly specific criticisms:

1. That bigotry and prejudice were practised in the Corps and by white businessmen in the adjacent community.
2. That seniors placed obstructions in the way of young Marines seeking to grapple with the race problem.
3. That there was a failure to comply with the spirit and letter of the law.
4. That effective leadership was lacking.²⁰

Acting with the report as a basis, General Ryan issued a division order on 27 June 1969 on the subject, "Fostering Unit Pride and Esprit Within the 2d Marine Division, FMF."²¹ The order was accompanied by a Platoon Commander's Pamphlet dealing with the racial situation and equality of treatment and opportunity. It was a calm, reasoned approach to the racial situation, which discussed the contributory causes of friction, and outlined procedures by which complaints of discrimination could be handled.

In spite of this constructive attempt to create an atmosphere in which racial conflicts could be resolved, a serious incident occurred on the base less than a month after the order was issued. On 20 July, the night before the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines was to mount out to join the Sixth Fleet at Rota, Spain, a party was held at a service club adjacent to the battalion's barracks area. A mixed group of about 100 black and 75 white Marines were gathered to listen to the band hired for the occasion. During the course of the evening there were a number of minor flare ups that heightened tension. Then, at about 2240, shortly after most men had left the club to return to quarters, an "extremely bloody" white Marine burst into the club to say that he had been attacked by a group of black Marines. During the next half hour, 15 more white Marines were assaulted at six different

locations by groups of black Marines. "The blacks were obviously in a high state of excitement, yelling, 'white beasts, call us niggers now, I'm the beast, look what I caught, we are going to mess up some beasts tonight, etc.' and were armed with broken broom handles and tree branches."²² Many white Marines were unaware of trouble in the area and were taken by surprise. One white corporal later died of massive head injuries received as a result of a beating. At least two white Marines were stabbed and another hospitalized in a serious condition as a result of head injuries.²³

Arrests were made and 44 men were charged; of this number, 24 had the charges dismissed, 5 were acquitted, and 13 were convicted of riot, disobedience, or assault. One man went absent without leave before the trial and the remaining black Marine was convicted of involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to nine years at hard labor.²⁴

Following this incident, a House of Representatives sub-committee of the Armed Services Committee held hearings at Camp Lejeune and in Washington. From the 1,250 pages of testimony and supporting documents that it amassed, the subcommittee felt that it could enumerate the following as its findings:

1. The racial problem existing at Camp Lejeune is a reflection of the Nation's racial problem.

2. The average young black Marine has racial pride, drive for identity, and sensitivity to discrimination that is characteristic of the young black in the United States.

3. The Marine Corps and the other services have led the way and made substantial progress in integration of the races since 1948.

4. Racial differences and misunderstandings at Camp Lejeune can be attributed in large measure to lack of effective communication at the junior levels of command as well as vertically between the young Marine and his commander.

5. A shortage of mature leadership attributed in large measure to rapid buildup and turnover at the NCO and junior officer levels at Camp Lejeune has aggravated the racial problem.

6. There was a deterioration in discipline at Camp Lejeune.

7. The instances of permissiveness appearing at the junior levels of command are damaging to discipline but unfortunately mirror the society in which the young men live.

8. The security procedures at Camp Lejeune on the evening of July 20 were insufficient despite some warning of impending trouble.

9. Improved security measures are necessary at the ammunition storage areas and armories, as well as improved lighting in populated areas throughout the Camp Lejeune complex.

10. The fatality which occurred did not result from any misconduct on the part of the victim.²⁵

The sub-committee reached a general conclusion that the disturbance "did not result from any specific provocation, but was generated by a few militant blacks who fanned the flames of racism, misconceptions, suspicions, and frustrations." The members felt that in identifying the root causes of race problems at Camp Lejeune they had also identified the root causes of similar problems that were typical of those at any military base.²⁶

A short time prior to the release of the sub-committee's report in mid-December 1969, the Commandant, General Leonard F. Chapman, Jr., discussed the racial problems as he saw them following a two-week tour of commands in the Pacific and Southeast Asia. Highly significant were his remarks: "There is no question about it though, we've got a problem. We thought we had eliminated discrimination in the Marine Corps and we are still determined to do so. It is apparent from the last two weeks that we've not been as successful as we thought."²⁷ A riotous flareup at Kaneohe Bay between black and white Marines in August 1969 and instances of "fragging," tossing grenades into the tents and huts of white officers and NCOs, which occurred principally in rear areas in Vietnam, and repeated clashes between the races in the Koza City area on Okinawa all served to highlight the explosive situation.

The Commandant had taken steps to clarify the racial problems in the Marine Corps and to alleviate some of the causes of black dissatisfaction earlier in the year with the publication on 2 September 1969 of a directive dealing with "Racial Relations and Instances of Racial Violence within the Marine Corps." The following day he discussed his message with representatives of the press. In the directive, General Chapman commented that the recent instances of racial violence had almost been unheard of among Marines in combat but appeared to have taken place as they moved to other areas or returned to the United States. He emphatically stated that acts of violence between Marines "can not be tolerated, and must stop."

He then proceeded to lay down a series of guiding steps in handling racial difficulties in the Corps, stressing that "the causes of friction, rather than the symptoms, must be identified by all commanders, frankly and openly discussed, and eliminated where possible." He affirmed his support of traditional high stand-

ards of military appearance, military courtesy, and proficiency in the Marine Corps.²⁸

In specific reference to the Afro/natural haircut long desired by many black Marines, he stated simply that commanders would permit it "providing it conforms with current Marine Corps regulations." In his press conference, the Commandant quoted the regulations: "Hair shall always be worn neatly and closely trimmed. It shall be clipped at the sides and back so as to present an evenly graduated appearance. The hair on top must not be over three inches in length. Long and conspicuous sideburns are prohibited."

General Chapman also dealt with what has been called the black power salute (the raising of a clenched fist). He reminded Marines that "no actions, signs, symbols, gestures, and words which are contrary to tradition will be permitted during formations or when rendering military courtesies to colors, the national anthem, or individuals." He noted however, that "individual signs between groups of individuals will be accepted for what they are—gestures of recognition and unity. . . ." ³⁰

The Commandant gave as one of the purposes of his directive his desire "to impress on all my commanders the absolute necessity of total impartiality for any consideration whatever based on race or creed or religion." He stressed that the Marine Corps had not and would not tolerate discrimination nor would it relax the firm, impartial discipline that had always been its standard.³¹

Black Officer Procurement and Human Relations ³²

There were many steps that the Marine Corps took in the late 60s to alleviate the tense racial situation in its ranks, but central to all the proposed and enacted programs was an intensive effort to increase the number of black officers. In May 1967 when the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower) recommended to the Commandant that the Corps double the number of its black officers, there were 155 serving on active duty out of total officer strength of approximately 23,000.³³ Major Kenneth H. Berthoud, Jr. (an officer selected for lieutenant colonel) was ordered to Headquarters Marine Corps following a tour in Vietnam to become the Special Advisor to the Deputy Chief of Staff (Manpower) for Minority Officer Procurement. He was charged with

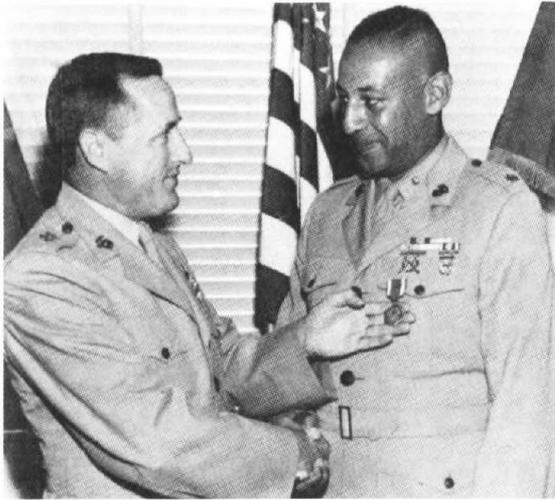
the coordination of procurement activities within the Marine Corps and with interested outside agencies.

A series of steps to energize the program was proposed by a study group at Headquarters and approved by the Commandant in October. The thrust of these proposals was to increase the visibility of black Marines, particularly black officers, to the black community by exposure in all kinds of media, to assign black officers as officer selection officers to make contact with black college men and women, and to make an extensive effort to find black enlisted men who had the qualifications to become officers. The first six black officers assigned to officer selection duties were: Captains Delmas A. Costin (1st Marine Corps District); George H. Walls, Jr. (4th); Tommy D. Gregory (6th); Merlon Hughes (8th); Ramon A. Johnson (9th); and Solomon P. Hill (12th).³⁴

One of the first outside agencies that Lieutenant Colonel Berthoud contacted in his efforts to find suitable officer candidates was the Montford Point Marine Association (MPMA). This organization, primarily of black Marines and former Marines but with a membership open to all, had been formed in 1965 when a group of approximately 300 men who had served at Montford Point gathered at Philadelphia's Adelphi Hotel in August to hold a reunion and relive their experiences. It was a happy and memorable occasion and as one participant recalled:

. . . every time the elevator doors would open on the ballroom floor, the enthusiastic greeting "Baby" could be heard, even on the street, three floors down; and men who hadn't seen each other for 20 or 22 years would warmly embrace. This scene was repeated many times for two full days.³⁵

Now a thriving nationally chartered veterans' organization with chapters in many cities, the Montford Point Marine Association consistently supported the black officer procurement effort. Intensely proud of those black Marines who had become officers, the association's members were enthusiastic about the effort to increase the number of officers and were well aware through contact with young black veterans of how vital the need was for a stronger representation of blacks among the Marine Corps leaders. It was "of paramount importance," as Major Edward L. Green, the first black Marine instructor to be assigned to the faculty of the Naval Academy (1968), observed, "to correct the under-



Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth H. Berthoud, *Special Advisor for Minority Officer Procurement*, is awarded the *Navy Commendation Medal with combat "V"* for his service in Vietnam in 1966–67 by Major General Raymond G. Davis, *Assistant Chief of Staff (G-1)* at Headquarters Marine Corps. (USMC Photo A415451).

representation of blacks in the officer structure of the services. Until we achieve an adequate black officer distribution throughout the command and policy-making levels, the basic fairness of the entire institution will remain in doubt.”³⁶

Major Green, who taught military law and leadership, introduced the first formal instruction in race relations at the academy, served as co-chairman of its Human Relations Advisory Council, and was instrumental in recruiting a number of black officers during his three-year tour of duty. Eight of the 12 black midshipmen in the class of 1972 joined the Marine Corps.³⁷ Similar dedicated efforts by Lieutenant Colonel Berthoud and his successors, Lieutenant Colonel Frank E. Petersen, Jr. and Major Solomon P. Hill, and the young black captains assigned to officer procurement duties helped the number of black officers on active duty to grow appreciably. On 30 September 1973, there were 378 black officers, 367 men and 11 women, 2.03 percent of the total number of Marine officers on active duty.³⁸ Since the primary target of officer procurement is the college graduate, competition from business, industry, and the other Services was tough. Although the number has increased slowly, less than five percent of the black male population is college educated. It is not likely, therefore, that the percentage of black Marine officers will soon approximate that of black

people in the United States, about 12 percent, or blacks enlisted in the Marine Corps, 17.41 percent on 30 September 1973 (29,839 men and 341 women.)³⁹

What has happened, however, to balance this lack of numbers is a far greater awareness within the Marine Corps among the white majority and the various minority racial groups of each others’ backgrounds, aspirations, and life styles. This has come about as the result of a formally structured program of human relations training that affects all Marines from generals to privates.

The program had its origin in the recommendations of a 17-month study done by the American Institutes of Research of Washington of the inter-racial situation in the Marine Corps. The research teams visited six major bases in the United States and conducted extensive interviews with Marines of every race and rank. They found that most Marines believed that inter-racial hostilities within the Corps were a reflection of similar feelings in American society and that these attitudes came into the Marine Corps with the individual Marine. They also found that the use of racial and ethnic epithets and the lack of understanding that their use indicated was a pervading problem. One investigator noted: “Marines, both black and white, told us they were most bothered by being called nigger, kike, wop, honkie, and other names by Marines they lived and worked with.”⁴⁰ In its report of 10 November 1971, the research institution recommended the establishment of a formal human relations course to be given to all Marines presented through a live discussion method guided by extensively trained instructors. The objective of the recommended program was to ensure through education more constructive relationships between Marines and between Marines and people outside the Marine Corps.

As a result of the findings of the study as it progressed and decisions at the Department of Defense level that all Services should initiate some form of schooling to improve racial relations, the Marine Corps took a number of steps to improve its grasp of the situation, including the organization in 1969 of an Equal Opportunity Branch at Headquarters to assist in the formulation of plans, policies, and programs “that would ensure that all Marines regardless of race, color, creed, or national origin are treated equally.”⁴¹ The post of Special Assist-



Sergeant Brenda Good, a human relations instructor, guides a discussion group of Marines from Headquarters Battalion, FMFPac. (Photo from Human Affairs Division, HQ, FMFPac).

ant to the Commandant for Minority Affairs was created and initially filled by Lieutenant Colonel Frank E. Petersen, Jr., then the Corps' senior black regular officer, who was later succeeded in 1972 by Major Edward L. Green, following his tour at the Naval Academy. The job, as it evolved, was that of trouble shooter, liaison officer, presenter, and, basically, advisor to the Commandant on the fundamentals of minority problems and how their solutions were working.

A Marine Corps Human Relations Institute was formally established at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego on 1 July 1972 to train instructors for the human relations program and to evaluate the effectiveness of the program at all organizational levels. Even before the first official class of officers and enlisted men was graduated, however, 47 instruc-

tors had been trained who were out in the field training others in the techniques of managing human relations seminars which were to be required of all Marines. The initial goal was that every Marine, regardless of his rank, was to have 20 hours of instruction and participation in these sessions and that such involvement was to be an annual affair. The new Commandant, General Robert E. Cushman, Jr., expressed the intent of the program in a letter to all general officers and commanding officers on 6 June 1972:

Our Corps is in the front line of the Nation's effort to improve the areas of understanding and cooperation among all Americans. I view our human relations efforts as major steps in helping the Corps to attain that environment of equal opportunity, understanding, brotherhood, and professionalism so vital to our future effectiveness. That environment, when com-

bined with an open, two-way channel of communication among all Marines, will permit us to devote our total energies toward maintaining what our Nation needs and expects from us, a combat-ready Corps of Marines.⁴²

In no sense were the human relation seminars intended to be “rap sessions” or undisciplined occasions for the airing of personal grievances. They were and are structured learning sessions with a purposeful cross-section of all ranks and races brought together in small groups to develop understanding and tolerance of each others’ background and point of view. General Cushman assessed the purpose of the program after a little over a year of its operation in an address to the members of the National Newspaper Publishers Association in Houston, Texas on 21 June 1973. He observed:

Each new Marine we get—whether officer or enlisted—brings along, figuratively speaking, his own personal seabag filled with the prejudices he has been collecting for eighteen years or more. The simple act of putting on a green uniform does not cause him to empty that seabag. But through training we try to instill the desire in him to *repack* that seabag—discarding the harmful preferences and prejudices—so it does both him and fellow Marines the most good.⁴³

In their attempts to solve the racial problems of the Marine Corps, Generals Chapman and Cushman called upon the advice of a Commandant’s Advisory Committee for Minority Affairs. Originally, General Chapman asked Mr. Hobart Taylor, Jr., a prominent black attorney in Washington, to investigate the racial situation in the Marine Corps. After two fact-finding trips as the Commandant’s representative, one to Camp Lejeune on 22–23 June 1970 and another to Okinawa from 15–22 November, Mr. Taylor recommended that an advisory committee of interested and concerned civilians be formed.⁴⁴ His suggestion was approved by the Commandant on 6 January 1971. A list of potential members was submitted for consideration on 12 April by the Equal Opportunity Branch and the final list of original members was approved in June. The first meeting of the committee was held on 6 August 1971.

Mr. Taylor served as committee chairman and the initial members included Richard A. Beaumont, W. Leonard Evans, Jr., Jose C. Gomez, Robert R. Gros, E. T. Guerrero, E. Frederick Marrow, A. B. Trowbridge, and



The Honorable Hobart Taylor, Jr. signs the guest book at Marine Barracks, Washington, after being presented the Navy Distinguished Public Service Award for his service as Chairman, Commandant’s Committee on Minority Affairs. Looking on is First Sergeant Lee M. Bradley. (USMC Photo 4705912).

Richard L. Vaughn. The committee was later enlarged by the addition of Dr. Lewis C. Dowdy. The members included lawyers, bankers, educators, blacks and whites, many of whom had held responsible positions in government. The committee’s basic charter was “to advise on ways to bring effectively the true policy of the Marine Corps for equal opportunity to minority groups, ease racial tensions, and improve minority relations.”⁴⁵

The members, individually and collectively, made a number of trips to various Marine bases in early 1972, speaking to all manner of Marines and setting a pattern for later similar inspection trips. They found, among other things, that many black Marines doubted the sincerity of the budding human relations program and that they felt that the military justice system was harsher on blacks than others. But as one member noted the Marine Corps was far ahead of private industry in its openness, willingness to be examined, and in its actions in regard to improving race relations.⁴⁶

Perhaps the crux of the race relations issue in the Marine Corps had been expressed earlier by Lieutenant General Keith B. McCutcheon, while he was commanding the III Marine Amphibious Force in Vietnam. In a 16 October 1970 article in *Sea Tiger*, the force’s weekly

newspaper, he had, drawing on his own experience in fighting a personal bout with cancer, pointed out:

Like human cancer this problem of racial minorities can have two outcomes. It can kill us if we don't operate soon enough. It can make us even stronger as a Corps and a nation if we face facts now and solve it. Let's continue to move out toward that end, but do so as mature, reasonable men in a sane, peaceful, nonviolent manner.⁴⁷

Vietnam

While United States military assistance to South Vietnam dates back to 1954, it was not until the spring of 1962 that Marine Corps helicopters were deployed to that country to support the South Vietnamese in their battles with the Viet Cong. It was March 1965 before Marine ground forces, the infantry battalions, artillery batteries, and tank platoons of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, were committed to defend the air base at Da Nang. Further ground troops and aircraft squadrons followed as the tempo of the fighting and the extent of American involvement increased. The III Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF), which controlled all American forces in the northern five provinces of South Vietnam, grew in strength until it included over 85,000 Marines in 1968, at the height the American commitment.

After major troop withdrawals began in September 1969, the South Vietnamese armed forces assumed an increasingly greater share of the fighting. In June 1971, the last Marine combat troops, the 3d Marine Amphibious Brigade, departed Da Nang. Marine aircraft groups returned to Vietnam temporarily in 1972 to support the South Vietnamese against resurgent North Vietnamese invaders, but these units were out of the country by the end of the year.⁴⁸ Over 448,000 Marines served in Vietnam between 1965 and 1973; of this number approximately 41,000 were black Marines.⁴⁹

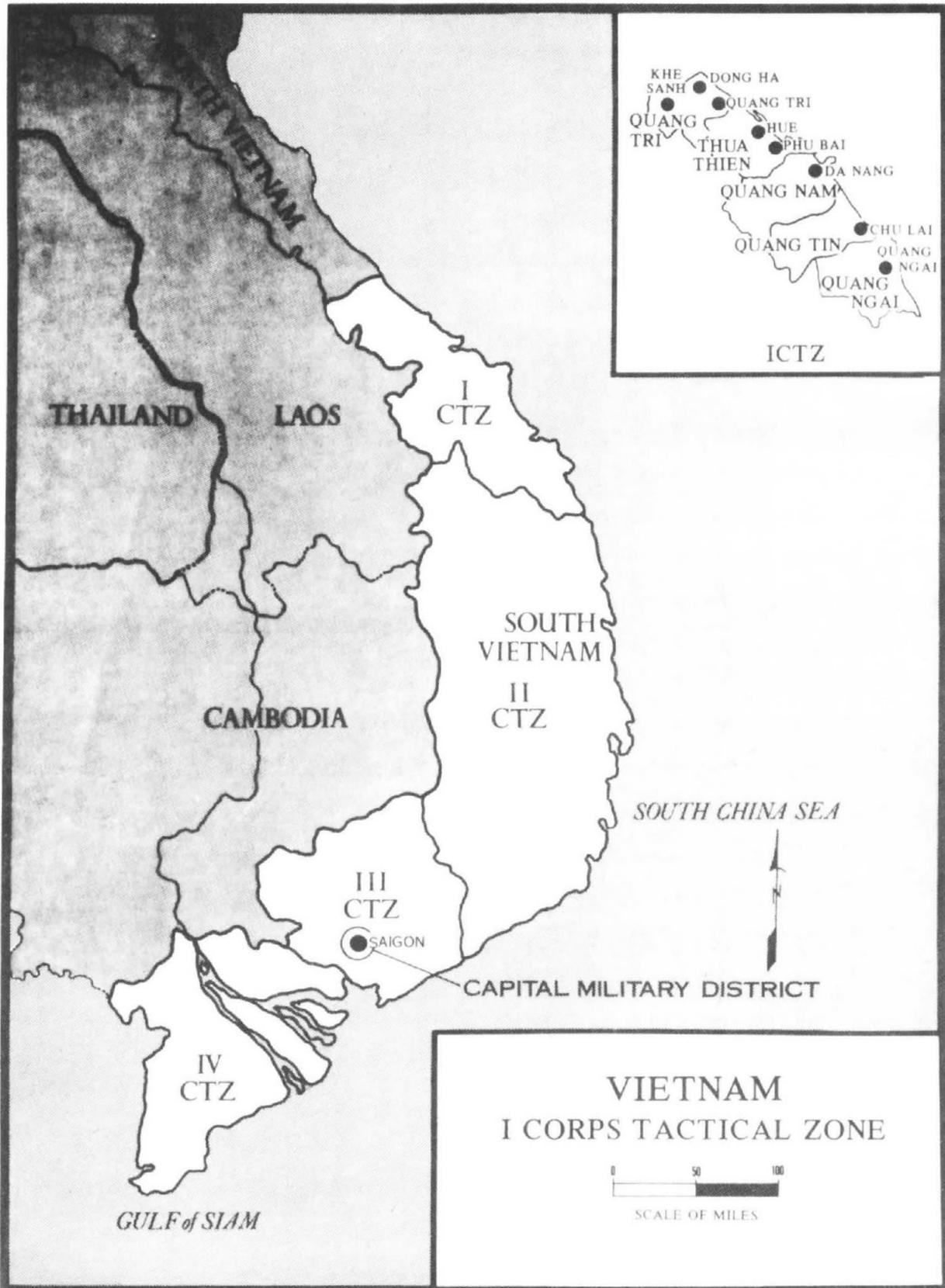
From the first commitment of troops until the last, black Marines were always present in Vietnam. To an even greater extent than in the Korean War, the identity of black effort as something apart from the total combat and combat support effort of all Marines is virtually impossible. Certainly there were individual heroics and accomplishments which can be cited, but in essence the Marine Corps' con-

tribution to the fighting was a team contribution and black Marines were an integral part of the team. There were racial incidents and confrontations in rear areas in Vietnam, but these disruptions did not extend to the sectors of fighting, where the color of a man's skin was of no import to his role as a combat Marine.

Squads, platoons, and companies were led in battle by black officers and NCOs. Responsible staff and support positions were held by blacks throughout III MAF. Black pilots flew close air support for the Marines and South Vietnamese on the ground and ranged north over the demilitarized zone in attacks on North Vietnamese military targets. Symbolic of the positions of trust given to black Marines were the Vietnam roles of the Corps' then senior regular black officer and NCO, Lieutenant Colonel Frank E. Petersen, Jr. and Sergeant Major Edgar R. Huff.

Lieutenant Colonel Petersen reached Vietnam in May 1968 after having served as the operations officer of the Marine Reserve Training Detachment at Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. He became the commanding officer of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314, a Phantom jet unit operating out of Chu Lai air base. Petersen was the first black to command a tactical air squadron in the Navy or the Marine Corps. While he had the squadron (May 1968-February 1969), VMFA-314 received the 1968 Hanson Award as the best fighter squadron in the Marine Corps. During his service as commanding officer and squadron pilot, Lieutenant Colonel Petersen was shot down and rescued and added over 280 combat missions to his total from Korea. He also added a Legion of Merit, a Purple Heart, and the Combat Action Ribbon to his personal decorations for this Vietnam service.⁵⁰

Sergeant Major Huff, like many black regulars, served two tours of duty in Vietnam. Originally arriving at Da Nang in May 1967 after serving as base sergeant major at Camp Pendleton, he was assigned duties as sergeant major of the 1st Military Police Battalion of the Force Logistic Command. In January 1968, during a fire fight with an enemy infiltrating force, he was severely wounded while rescuing a radioman trapped in an open field by enemy fire. Recommended for the Silver Star for his heroic actions, he eventually received the Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts for his wounds. In May 1968, when the sergeant major of III MAF was wounded during an





Leading his platoon in an operation south of Da Nang in March 1967 is Staff Sergeant Percy J. Price, former military heavyweight boxing champion. (USMC Photo A370016).

enemy rocket attack on force headquarters, Huff as the next senior sergeant major in III MAF was appointed force sergeant major by the commanding general, then Lieutenant General Robert E. Cushman, Jr. Although he only held the position for a month while he finished his Vietnam tour, Huff was back again in October 1970 to serve as III MAF sergeant major after two years as the sergeant major of the 2d Marine Aircraft Wing at Cherry Point. By now the senior sergeant major in the Marine Corps in point of service in grade, Huff served successively under Lieutenant Generals Keith B. McCutcheon and Donn J. Robertson and witnessed the withdrawal of III MAF from Vietnam to Okinawa.⁵¹

Symbolic of the pervasive combat presence of black Marines in Vietnam was the fact that the senior enlisted Marine in the epic battle for Khe Sanh was a black man who had first reported as a recruit to Montford Point on 8 April 1943. During the North Vietnamese Tet offensive in the early months of 1968, Sergeant Major Agrippa W. Smith of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines was omnipresent in his unit's positions at the embattled combat base. "Gripper" Smith's battalion was attached to the 26th Marines, the regiment charged with defending the strategic northern outpost.

When the decision was made to award the regiment and its reinforcing units the Presidential Unit Citation for their outstanding

combat performance, Sergeant Major Smith was chosen to accompany the regimental commander, Colonel David E. Lownds, and the regimental colors back to Washington. In a much-publicized ceremony at the White House on 23 May 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson placed the citation streamer on the colors of the 26th, proudly borne by Sergeant Major Smith.⁵² On his return to Vietnam in June 1968, Smith, who was awarded the Bronze Star for his part in the Khe Sanh battle, fittingly became the sergeant major of the 26th Marines.⁵³

There is no way of calculating the number of decorations earned by black Marines in the Vietnam War: Navy Crosses, Silver Stars, Distinguished Flying Crosses, Bronze Stars, and a host of other medals were won by these men for heroic action and meritorious service. In one category of awards, however, there is no doubt about who and how many were the recipients.

Five black Marines were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam fighting, each man for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty." All used their own bodies in the thick of a fire fight to shield the blast and fragments



Lieutenant Colonel Frank E. Petersen, Jr., Commanding Officer, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314, climbs into his Phantom jet for a combat mission in 1968. (USMC Photo A422355).



His platoon leader rushes to the assistance of Corporal Mitchell Smith, machine gunner with Company M, 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, during a fire fight with Viet Cong in 1966. (USMC photo A369436).

of enemy grenades from their comrades; all perished in the selfless attempts. On 28 February 1967, during operations in the jungle northwest of Cam Lo, the first black Marine earned his country's highest decoration. He was PFC James Anderson, Jr. of Compton, California, a rifleman with Company F, 2d Battalion, 3d Marines. Later that year, on 6 September, Sergeant Rodney M. Davis of Macon, Georgia, a platoon guide in Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines sacrificed his life for his men during heavy fighting in Quang Nam Province. PFC Ralph H. Johnson of Charleston, South Carolina, on 5 March 1968, while serving as a scout with Company A, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion deep in enemy territory, saved the life of one of his comrades at the cost of his own. On 23 February 1969, PFC Oscar P. Austin of Phoenix, Arizona, an assistant

machine gunner with Company E, 2d Battalion, 7th Marines was killed while protecting a wounded man from enemy grenades and rifle fire. The fifth black Marine to be awarded the Medal of Honor was PFC Robert H. Jenkins, Jr. of Interlachen, Florida for actions while serving as a machine gunner with Company C, 3d Reconnaissance Battalion on 5 March 1969 in the defense of Fire Support Base Argonne south of the demilitarized zone.⁵⁴

Conclusion

Throughout the troubled years of the Vietnam War, new black Marines did their duty in combat, but a significant minority could not reconcile themselves to the Corps as they found it outside of battle. Since they were part of American society, they carried into the



President Lyndon B. Johnson shakes hand with Sergeant Major Agrippa W. Smith after a ceremony awarding the Presidential Unit Citation to the 26th Marines for heroic action at Khe Sanh in 1968. Looking on is Colonel David E. Lownds, who commanded the regiment. (USMC Photo A416505).

Marine Corps “prejudices felt by all Americans;”⁵⁵ in this respect they were no different than their white comrades in arms. Victims of discrimination in civilian life, the young blacks were suspicious of the military system in which they found themselves and quick to find or infer discriminatory practices. Their militancy in advocating what they considered their just rights and their sometimes abrasive projection of black solidarity introduced a new element of concern to leaders of the Marine Corps. It was realized early in the 1960s that the *status quo* of life in the Corps was unalterably shaken by events taking place outside its confines. It was quite evident that there was no room for complacency about the racial situation and that strong and effective measures to alleviate a challenging problem would have to be taken. And they were. The thrust of this effort was

toward the complete elimination of discrimination, even “the appearance, however unintentional, of discrimination.”⁵⁶ Coupled with this insistence on equality of opportunity was an ongoing Corps-wide program to promote mutual understanding of the other man’s point of view.

All this was a far cry from the situation that faced the first black Marines who reported to Montford Point Camp in August 1942. Joining a segregated Marine Corps that did not want them, these men won themselves a proud niche in Marine Corps history. They proved they could wear the Marine uniform with honor, that they could persevere in the face of adversity, and that they could hold up their heads to their family and friends and say, “I am somebody and I have done something.”⁵⁷ These pioneer black Marines won the way for others

that followed; what they did proved there was a place, an important place, for blacks in the Marine Corps.

The first black Marine to complete 30 years of regular service retired on 28 September 1972. His military life spanned the dark years of segregation and the gradual advance toward integration to the present climate of human awareness. When Sergeant Major Huff ended his active duty years, he summed up a varied and honored career with a simple oft-repeated statement: "The Marine Corps has been good to me and I feel I have been good to the Marine Corps."⁵⁸ There can be no better yardstick by which to evaluate the worth of the Corps to black Marines and their worth in return than that philosophy, for good measure received, good measure given.

The grand old man in the history of black Marines would have to be Sergeant Major Gilbert H. "Hashmark" Johnson. Tough as nails when he presided over the recruit drill field at Montford Point and imbued throughout his career with a driving ambition for black Marines to succeed, to be somebody, he mellowed somewhat in later life to the status of elder statesman and spokesman for a generation of men who led the way toward desegregation and the end of discrimination in the Marine Corps. He died, stricken by a heart attack, while addressing a testimonial dinner of the Camp Lejeune Chapter of the Montford Point Marine Association on 5 August 1972. His topic, typically, was the history of the MPMA and blacks in the Marine Corps.⁵⁹ There could have been no man prouder of the accomplishments of black Marines, and perhaps no man who left such a personal mark on others through his insistence that the first of his race in the Corps would "measure up." It was altogether fitting, therefore, that his name was commemorated in the Marine Corps



Sergeant Major Edgar R. Huff, who retired in 1972 after 30 years service, having held the rank of sergeant major longer than any Marine on active duty. (USMC Photo A135412).

where it first began to be known. On the recommendation of the Executive Board of the MPMA, endorsed by Assistant Secretary of the Navy James E. Johnson, himself a Montford Pointer, the Commandant, General Cushman, approved the renaming of Montford Point Camp.⁶⁰ On 19 April 1974, in ceremonies at Camp Lejeune, Camp Gilbert H. Johnson was activated at Montford Point.⁶¹ This well-deserved tribute to a distinguished human being honors every black man and woman who has worn the Marine uniform, as he did, with pride of self and Corps.

APPENDIX A

NOTES

Introduction

¹ Louis F. Middlebrook, *History of Maritime Connecticut during the American Revolution, 1775–1783*, 2 vols. (Salem, Mass.: Essex Institute, 1925), I, p. 26, 118–120; *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War*, 17 vols. (Boston, 1896–1908), V, p. 879, XIV, p. 955; *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2d Series, Vol. I, pp. 296–97.

² John Elliot ltr to James Read, dtd 24 November 1778 (John Paul Jones Papers, Library of Congress).

³ Facsimile copy in Reference Section, History and Museums Division, Headquarters Marine Corps of original held by Pennsylvania Historical Society (hereafter RefSec, Hist&Mus Div, HQMC).

⁴ Office of Naval Records and Library, *Naval Documents Related to the Quasi-War between the United States and France:*

Naval Operations from February 1797 to October 1798, 7 vols. (Washington, 1935–1938), I, p. 41.

⁵ Maj William Ward Burrows ltr to Lt John Hall, dtd 8 September 1798 (Chronology File, 1798—RefSec, Hist&Mus Div, HQMC).

⁶ Col Cyril Field, RMLI, *Britain's Sea Soldiers*, 2 vols. (Liverpool: The Lyceum Press, 1924) I, p. 26

⁷ Navy Department, *Regulations, Circulars, Orders & Decisions, for the Guide of Officers of the Navy of the United States* (Washington: C. Alexander, 1851), p. 6.

⁸ Dennis D. Nelson, *The Integration of the Negro into the U. S. Navy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1951), p. 11.

Chapter 1—A Chosen Few

Unless otherwise noted, the material in this chapter is derived from: Muster rolls of the units stationed at Montford Point Camp, Aug42—Jul43 (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC); SgtMaj Gilbert H. Johnson interview with Hist Div, dtd 27–28 Jun72 (Oral History Collection, Hist&Mus Div, HQMC), hereafter *G. H. Johnson interview*; Sgt Maj Edgar R. Huff interview with Hist Div, dtd 26–28 Jun72 (Oral History Collection, Hist&Mus Div, HQMC), hereafter *Huff interview*; *Montford Point, Camp Lejeune, New River, North Carolina* (Philadelphia: Campus Publishing Company, c. 1943), hereafter *Montford Point Pictorial*. The chapter title was decided upon before the authors were aware of the existence of a novel of black Marines' experience in the late 1940s, *A Chosen Few* by Hari Rhodes (Bantam Books, 1965). A copy of the book was donated to the History and Museums Division Library by Mr. Joseph Carpenter.

¹ From the original draft of Sgt Edward J. Evans "Men of Montford Point" (Negro Marines—Published Articles, Subject File, RefSec, Hist&Mus Div, HQMC).

² MajGen Thomas Holcomb testimony in Hearings of the General Board of the Navy, dtd 23Jan42, Subj: "Enlistment of Men of Colored Race (201)" (Operational Archives Branch, Naval Historical Center), p. 18.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁶ R. L. Lapica, ed., *Facts on File Yearbook—1942* (New York: Persons Index on File, Inc., 1943), p. 91M, hereafter cited as *Facts on File*, preceded by the year and followed by page location.

⁷ 1942 *Facts on File*, p. 109A.

⁸ Navy Department Press and Radio Release, dtd 20May42 (Negro Marines Press Releases, Subject File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁹ Gen Ray A. Robinson interview with HistDiv, dtd 18–19 Mar68 (Oral History Collection, Hist Div, HQMC).

¹⁰ Excerpt from Evans, "Men of Montford Point." *op. cit.*

¹¹ LtCol Frank O. Hough, Maj Verle E. Ludwig, and Henry I. Shaw, Jr., *Pearl Harbor to Guadalcanal—History of U. S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II*, Vol. 1 (Washington: Historical Branch, G–3 Division, Headquarters U. S. Marine Corps, 1958), pp. 78–83, 223–224.

¹² "Col Cockrell Succeeds Col Woods as CO at MP," in *Camp Lejeune Globe*, dtd 6Sep44, p. 2.

¹³ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

¹⁴ Col Samuel A. Woods, Jr., memo to Director, Division of Plans and Policies, dtd 21Apr42 (File 2385/40–51, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Central Files, HQMC).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ CMC ltr to OIC, Eastern, Central, and Southern Recruiting Divisions, dtd 15May42 (File 2385/40–51, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Central Files, HQMC).

¹⁷ *Huff interview*.

¹⁸ Mr. Obie Hall interview with HistDiv, dtd 16Aug72 (Oral History Collection, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC), hereafter *Hall interview*.

¹⁹ CMC to Prospective CO, 51st, dtd 14Aug42 (File 2385/40–51, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Central Files, HQMC).

²⁰ Col Theodore A. Holdahl Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

²¹ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

²² Battery A, 51st Composite Defense Battalion Muster Roll, Aug42.

²³ CMC ltr to CO, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, dtd 9Oct42 (File 2385/40–51, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Central Files, HQMC).

²⁴ CMC memo to CO, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, dtd 19Dec42, Subj: "51st Composite Defense Battalion" (File 2385/40–51, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Central Files, HQMC).

²⁵ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

²⁶ *Huff interview*.

²⁷ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

²⁸ Personal data sheets on SgtMaj Charles F. Anderson and 1stSgt Charles W. Simmons (Negro Marine Officers, Subject File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

²⁹ *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, dtd 9Mar46.

³⁰ Director, Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 29 Oct 42, subj: "Enlistment of Colored personnel in the Marine Corps Reserve" (File 2385/40–51, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Central Files, HQMC).

³¹ M–1 Section, Division of Plans and Policies memo to Chief of Naval Personnel, dtd 8Mar43, subj: "Procurement of colored personnel through Selective Service" (Negroes in the Armed Services File, Central Files, HQMC).

³² Col Samuel A. Woods, Jr., memo to Director, Division of Plans and Policies, subj: "Colored Personnel" (File 2385/40–51, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Central Files, HQMC).

³³ Mr. David C. Hendricks interview with HistDiv, dtd 7Jun72; Mr. Herman Darden, Jr., interview with HistDiv, dtd 15Aug72, hereafter *Darden interview* (Oral History Collection, HistDiv, HQMC).

³⁴ CO, Montford Point Camp ltr to CMC, dtd 19May43, Subj: "Colored Personnel, Weekly Report" (Copy in Negro Marines, Subject File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

³⁵ Col William B. Onley Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

³⁶ Maj Albert O. Madden Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

³⁷ MGySgt Frederic H. Clayton interview with HistDiv, ca. 15Sep72.

³⁸ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

³⁹ Hendricks interview, *op. cit.*

⁴⁰ *Huff interview*.

⁴¹ SgtMaj Gilbert H. Johnson remarks at a meeting of the Camp Lejeune Chapter, Montford Point Marine Association, ca. 1967 (Negro Marines, Subject File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁴² *G. H. Johnson interview*; *Hall interview*.

⁴³ CMC remarks at Montford Point Marine Association's 25th Anniversary Testimonial Dinner, Sheraton Park Hotel, Washington, D. C., dtd 20Apr68 (CMC Speech File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁴⁴ *Huff interview*, Clayton interview, *op. cit.*; Mr. Alex Johnson interview with HistDiv, dtd 16Aug72, hereafter *A. Johnson interview* (Oral History Collection, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

Chapter 2—The 51st Defense Battalion

Unless otherwise noted, the material in this chapter is derived from: Muster Rolls of the 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Aug42-Jun43 and the 51st Defense Battalion, Jun43-Jan46; 51st Defense Battalion War Diary, Apr 44-Aug45; Detachment A, 51st Defense Battalion War Diary, Mar-Jul44; *Darden interview*; *Hall interview*.

¹ LtCol Floyd A. Stephenson Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

² Commanding Officer, 51st Composite Battalion ltr to CMC, dtd 5 May 1943, Subj: Change of Organization, 51st Composite Defense Battalion (2385/40-51 File, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Central Files, HQMC).

³ *Ibid.*, 1st Endorsement by Col Samuel A. Woods, Jr., dtd 7 May 1943.

⁴ CMC ltr to Commanding Officer, Montford Point Camp, dtd 28 May 1943, Subj: Change of Organization, 51st Composite Defense Battalion (2385/40-51 File, 51st Composite Defense Battalion, Central Files, HQMC).

⁵ T/O E-410, Defense Battalion, approved 25 June 1943 (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁶ LtCol Floyd A. Stephenson ltr to CMC, dtd 30 May 1944, Subj: 51st Defense Battalion, Fleet Marine Force (Negroes in the Armed Forces File, Central Files, HQMC), hereafter *Stephenson letter*.

⁷ News Release, Public Relations Office, Camp Lejeune, Sep43 (Negro Marines, Press Release File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC); Casualty Card of Cpl Gilbert Fraser, Jr. (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁸ *Stephenson letter*.

⁹ *Darden interview*.

¹⁰ "Flashes from 51st," *New River Pioneer*, dtd 16Sep43, p. 8. (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹¹ *Hall interview*.

¹² *Stephenson letter*.

¹³ CO, 51st DefBn ltr to CMC, dtd 20Jul44, Subj: Combat Efficiency, 51st DefBn (Negroes in the Armed Forces File, Central Files, HQMC).

¹⁴ LtCol Floyd A. Stephenson ltr to CMC, dtd 25Sep 44, Subj: 51st DefBn, circumstances attending its departure from Camp Lejeune, N. C., and combat efficiency of (Negroes in the Armed Forces File, Central Files, HQMC), hereafter *Stephenson letter II*.

¹⁵ *Hall interview*.

¹⁶ *Stephenson letter*.

¹⁷ Dr. Charles W. Simmons ltr to DirMCHist&Mus, dtd 23May74, hereafter *Simmons letter*.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Copy of Col Woods ltr to CMC filed with *Stephenson letter II*.

²⁰ *Stephenson letter*.

²¹ *Darden interview*.

²² Col Curtis W. LeGette Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

²³ *Darden interview*; *Hall interview*.

²⁴ 7th DefBn War Diaries and History, Dec40-Mar44.

²⁵ *Hall interview*.

²⁶ CMC ltr to CO, 51st DefBn, dtd 25May44, Subj: Marine Corps and Government Property, waste, misuse, pilferage, and vandalism of (Negroes in the Armed Forces File, Central Files, HQMC).

²⁷ Col Curtis W. LeGette ltr to CO, 51st DefBn, dtd 27Jun44, Subj: Record of the Proceedings of an Investigation Conducted at Headquarters, 51st Defense Battalion In The Field, By Order of the Commanding Officer, 51st Defense Battalion, To inquire into alleged damages to Marine Corps and Government Property formerly on charge to the 51st Defense Battalion, U. S. Marine Corps (Negroes in the Armed Forces File, Central Files, HQMC).

²⁸ *Stephenson letter*.

²⁹ FMF Status Report, Ground, dtd 31Aug44 (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

³⁰ Commandant Samoan Defense Group ltr to Col Wade LeGette, dtd 14Aug44, in LeGette Officer's Case File, *op. cit.*

³¹ *Darden interview*.

³² *Simmons letter*.

³³ 10th AAA Bn War Diaries, May-Nov44.

³⁴ *Darden interview*; *Hall interview*.

³⁵ *Darden interview*.

³⁶ *Hall interview*.

³⁷ Harry McAlpin in the Baltimore *Afro-American*, 20Oct45 (Negro Marines, Press Clippings File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

Chapter 3—The 52d Defense Battalion

Unless otherwise noted, the material in this chapter is derived from: Muster rolls of the 52d Defense Battalion, Dec43—Apr46; 52d Defense Battalion War Diary, Dec43—Mar46; Detachment A, 52d Defense Battalion War Diary, Sep44—Apr45; *G. H. Johnson interview*; *A. Johnson interview*; "Montford Musings" and "52d Defense Bn." columns in *Camp Lejeune Globe*, Jan—Aug44.

¹ Col Augustus W. Cockrell Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

² BGen Joseph W. Earnshaw official biography (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

³ Col Thomas C. Moore, Jr. Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

⁴ *A. Johnson interview*.

⁵ Henry I. Shaw, Jr., Bernard T. Nalty, and Edwin T. Turnbladh, *Central Pacific Drive—History of U. S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II*, Vol. III (Washington: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC, 1966), p. 622.

⁶ George W. Garand and Truman R. Strobridge, *Western Pacific Operations—History of U. S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II*, Vol. IV (Washington: Historical Division, HQMC, 1971), pp. 414–415.

⁷ *A. Johnson interview*.

⁸ Col David W. Silvey Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

⁹ Atoll Commander, USNAB Navy 234 ltr to Commanding Officer, 52d Defense Battalion, dtd 7Mar45, in Col Moore's Officer's Case File, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

¹¹ HQMC printout of all Negro battle casualties, dtd 9Apr48 (File 85A Negro Strength, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹² "Negro Marines in World War II" typescript history written about 1946 (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC), hereafter *Negro Marines in World War II*.

¹³ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

¹⁴ John H. Griffin "My Life in the Marine Corps" unpublished MS (Personal Paper's Collection, Museums Branch, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC)

¹⁵ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

¹⁶ *A. Johnson interview*.

¹⁷ Muster rolls of Heavy Antiaircraft Group (Provisional), Saipan, Feb46-Feb47.

¹⁸ Muster rolls of 3d Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion (Composite), May46-May47.

¹⁹ Commanding Officer, 52d Defense Battalion ltr to CMC, dtd 15Jan46, subj: Employment of Colored Personnel as Anti-aircraft Artillery Troops; recommendations on (Personnel, Colored 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

Chapter 4—Depot and Ammunition Companies

Unless otherwise noted, the material in this chapter is derived from: Muster Rolls of the depot and ammunition companies formed at Montford Point 1943–1946; Muster Rolls of FMF headquarters units having Stewards' Branch personnel assigned, 1944–1945; Statistics Division, Personnel Department, HQMC printout of all Negro battle casualties, dtd 9 April 1948 (File 85A, Negro Strength, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC); Casualty cards of Negro casualties (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC); *Huff interview*: Mr. Robert D. Little interview with HistDiv, dtd 16Aug72 (Oral History Collection, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC); Mr. Norman Sneed interview with HistDiv, dtd 16Aug72 (Oral History Collection, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹ Machine Records Section, Personnel Department, HQMC, Negro Casualties of World War II, ca. 29Jun48 (File 85A, Negro Strength, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

² T/O D-701, Depot Company, approved 18Feb43 (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

³ Letter of Instruction 421, dtd 14May43.

⁴ *Simmons letter*.

⁵ T/O E-703, Ammunition Company, approved 31Aug43 (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁶ Little interview, *op. cit.*

⁷ T/O E-701, Depot Company, approved 19Jul43 (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁸ *Huff interview*.

⁹ *San Diego Chevron*, dtd 10Apr43 (Negro Marines Press Clippings, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹⁰ 4th Base Depot War Diaries and Organizational History, Apr43–Jan44.

¹¹ 1st Base (Field) Depot History, Mar41–Jun44, p. 4.

¹² Sneed interview, *op. cit.*; 4th Base Depot War Diaries, *op. cit.*

¹³ Quoted in Capt Elmer Wilde, "Night Fighters," Marine Corps press release (Negro Marines Press Releases, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹⁴ Quoted in 1stSgt David M. Davies, "Officers Pleased with Performance of Race Fighters," *Atlanta Daily World*, 27Aug44 (Negro Marines Press Clippings, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹⁵ Quoted in "Negro Marines Win Battle Spurs; Defeated Japan's Best on Saipan," *Pittsburgh Courier*, 2Sep44

(Negro Marines Press Clippings, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Quoted in *Camp Lejeune Globe*, 6Jan45.

¹⁸ *Time*, 24Jul44.

¹⁹ Copy of ltr of commendation filed with card files for 4th Ammunition Company (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

²⁰ 5th Field Depot War Diary, Jan45 and Apr45; Copy of Silver Star Citation, PFC Luther Woodward.

²¹ Copies of citations filed with card files for 7th Ammunition Company and 11th Depot Company (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

²² George W. Garand and Truman R. Strobridge, *Western Pacific Operations—History of U. S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II*, Vol. IV (Washington: HistDiv, HQMC, 1971), pp. 708–10.

²³ Muster Roll, 36th Marine Depot Company, Aug45; Montford Point Marine Association Convention Program, Aug72, p. 10.

²⁴ Garand and Strobridge, *op. cit.*, p. 710.

²⁵ USS *Bladen* (APA-63) Action Report, Serial 08 of 14Apr45 (Operational Archives Branch, Naval Historical Center).

²⁶ Unless otherwise noted the material on the occupation of Japan and North China is derived from: Henry I. Shaw, Jr. *The United States Marines in the Occupation of Japan and The United States Marines in North China, 1945–1949* (Washington: HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC, 1969 and 1968).

²⁷ *Huff interview*.

²⁸ Information regarding the investigation is derived from: Guam Island Commander ltr to Col Samuel A. Woods, Jr., dtd 30Dec44, Subj: Court of Inquiry to inquire into the unlawful assembly and riot and the attending circumstances at the Naval Supply Depot, Guam, on 25 and 26 December 1944, including Record of Proceedings (Navy JAG File 9/57:24-1—#35227).

²⁹ *Ibid.* Exhibit 2, Record of Proceedings.

³⁰ *Ibid.* Record of Proceedings, p. 708.

³¹ Quoted in Montford Point Marine Association Convention Program, Aug72, p. 16.

³² Little interview, *op. cit.*

Chapter 5—Between the Wars

Unless otherwise noted the material in this chapter is derived from: Muster rolls of units at Montford Point Camp, 1944–49; 85A Negro, Miscellaneous File, Personnel Department (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC); "The History of the Negro Officer in the Marine Corps" and "Negro Marines in World War II" (Negro Press Release File RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC); *G. H. Johnson interview*; *Huff interview*; *Camp Lejeune Globe*, 1945–1949.

¹ Selective Service System, *Special Groups* (Special Monograph No. 10), 2 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953) II, pp. 201–202.

² G-1 (M-1) Section, Division of Plans and Policies, HQMC, Operational Diaries, 7Dec41–31Aug45, Section XV, Colored Personnel (Folder 67, Administrative History File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

³ Col Augustus W. Cockrell ltr to MajGen Dewitt Peck, dtd 8Jan45 in SgtMaj Charles F. Anderson Enlisted Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC)

⁴ "Montford Musings," *Camp Lejeune Globe*, 21Mar45.

⁵ 9th Platoon Commanders Class statistics in 1st Sgt Charles W. Simmons Enlisted Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

⁶ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

⁷ *Simmons letter*.

⁸ Officer in Charge, Statistics Division, Personnel Department memo to Director of Public Information, dtd 13Jul48 (85A Negro Miscellaneous File, Personnel Department, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁹ *Camp Lejeune Globe*, 6Feb46.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3Jan46.

¹¹ *Darden interview*; *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 4May46 (Negro Press Clippings File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹² Director, Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 8 Apr 46, Subj: Negro Personnel in the Post-War Marine Corps (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Director, Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 13 May 46, Subj: Negro Personnel in the Post-War Marine Corps, with subsequent memoranda (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Col John F. Mallard Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

¹⁹ *Camp Lejeune Globe*, 13Feb46.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 29May46.

²¹ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

²² Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks, Naval Ammunition Depot, McAlester, Okla. ltr to CMC, dtd 5Nov46, Subj: Assignment of colored Marines (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Director, Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 6Dec46, Subj: Assignment of Negro Marines to MB, Naval Magazine, Port Chicago, California, in lieu of MB, NAD, McAlester, Okla. (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

²⁵ CNO memo to CMC, dtd 6Jan47, Subj: Assignment of Negro Marines to Marine Barracks, Naval Magazine, Port Chicago, Calif., and Marine Barracks, Naval Ammunition Depot, Earle, N. J. (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

²⁶ Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 30Jan47, Subj: Negro requirements (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

²⁷ Commandant, 12th Naval District naval speedletter, to CMC, dtd 5Mar47 (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

²⁸ Commandant, 12th Naval District naval speedletter, to CMC, dtd 6Jun47 (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

²⁹ Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 29May47, Subj: Program for Accelerated Attrition of Negro Marines (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

³⁰ Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 28Aug47, Subj: Requirements for General Duty Negro Marines (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

³¹ *Huff interview*.

³² *G. H. Johnson interview*.

³³ *Huff interview*.

³⁴ Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 11Jun47, Subj: Negro Requirements as Assignments (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

³⁵ CMC naval speedletter to Commandant, 12th Naval District, dtd 18Jun47 (personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

³⁶ CMC ltr to Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks, Naval Ammunition Depot, Hingham, Mass., dtd 18Jun47, Subj: Assignment of Negro Marines; CMC ltr to Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks, Naval Ammunition Depot, Ft. Mifflin, Pa., dtd 18Jun47 (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

³⁷ CMC ltr to Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks, Naval Shipyard, Brooklyn, N. Y., dtd 18Jun47, Subj: Assignment of Negro Marines to Second Guard Company (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

³⁸ Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks, Naval Shipyard, Brooklyn, N. Y. ltr to CMC, dtd 30Jun47 (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

³⁹ Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks, Naval Ammunition Depot, Hingham, Mass. ltr to CMC, dtd 26Jun47, Subj: Comments on Assignment of Negro Marines (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁴⁰ Commandant, Naval Base, New York, N. Y. ltr to CMC, dtd 10Jul47, Subj: Assignment of Negro Marines to Second Guard Company, Marine Barracks, New York Naval Shipyard, Brooklyn, N. Y. (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁴¹ Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 29Jul47, Subj: Negro Requirements and Assignments (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁴² Bureau of Ordnance memo to CNO (Op-04), dtd 11Aug47, Subj: Naval Ammunition Depot, Earle, N. J.; Assignment of Negro Marine Complement (Personnel Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁴³ Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 20Aug47, Subj: Assignments of Negro Marines (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁴⁴ Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 28Aug47, Subj: Requirements for General Duty Marines (Personnel, Colored, 1946–1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁴⁵ Bureau of Supplies and Accounts memo to CNO, dtd 14Oct47, Subj: Assignment of Negro Marines (Personnel, Colored, 1946-1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁴⁶ Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 19Nov47 (Personnel Colored, 1946-1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁴⁷ CNO memo to Chief, Bureau of Ordnance, dtd 6Jan48, Subj: Assignment of Negro Marines at Naval Ammunition Depot, Earle, Red Bank, New Jersey (Personnel, Colored, 1946-1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁴⁸ Richard J. Stillman, II, *Integration of the Negro in the U. S. Armed Forces* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), pp. 37-38.

⁴⁹ 1948 *Facts on File*, p. 96.

⁵⁰ Stillman, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

⁵¹ SgtMaj Gilbert H. Johnson Enlisted Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

⁵² 1948 *Facts on File*, p. 244J-K.

⁵³ Stillman, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

⁵⁴ *Time*, 5Jun50.

⁵⁵ CMC memo to Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Air), dtd 17Mar49 (1535-110 Negroes-Asiatic, 1Jan49-30Jun50 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁵⁶ 1949 *Facts on File*, p. 133P.

⁵⁷ ALNAV 49-447, dtd 23Jun49 in *Navy Department Bulletin*, Jan-Jun 1949, p. 38.

⁵⁸ Marine Corps memo, dtd 18Nov49 (1535-110 Negroes-Asiatic, 1Jan49-30Jun50 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁵⁹ *Camp Lejeune Globe*, 27Feb46.

⁶⁰ Division of Plans and Policies memo to CMC, dtd 14Feb46, Subj: Letter of Instruction 421; revocation of (Negro Marines, 1946-1948 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁶¹ Gen Alfred H. Noble interview by HistDiv, HQMC, dtd 20-23May68 (Oral History Collection, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC), p. 103.

⁶² *Chicago Defender*, 19Feb49 (Negro Press Clippings File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ LtCol Pat Meid, USMCR, *Marine Corps Women's Reserve In World War II* (Washington: HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC, 1968), p. 94.

⁶⁵ Mr. A. Philip Randolph ltr to Gen Clifton B. Cates, dtd 8May49 (1535-110 Negroes-Asiatics, 1Jan49-30Jun50 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁶⁶ Gen Clifton B. Cates ltr to Mr. Philip Randolph, dtd 10Mar49 (1535-110 Negroes-Asiatics, 1Jan49-30Jun50 File, Central Files, HQMC).

⁶⁷ LtCol Frank W. Ferguson Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

⁶⁸ *Huff interview.*

⁶⁹ *G. H. Johnson interview.*

Chapter 6—A Decade of Integration

Unless otherwise noted the material in this chapter is derived from: 85A Negro Miscellaneous File, Personnel Department (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC); "The History of the Negro Officer in the Marine Corps" (Negro Press Release File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC); *G. H. Johnson interview*; *Huff interview*; CWO James E. Johnson interview with Historical Division, dated 27Mar73 and 30Oct73 (Oral History Collection, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC), hereafter *J. E. Johnson interview*; LtCol Frank Petersen, Jr. interview with Historical Division, HQMC, dtd 1Aug72 (Oral History Collection, Hist&Mus Div, HQMC), hereafter *Petersen interview*.

¹ 85A Negro Strength 46-53 File (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

² Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), Directorate of Information Operations, *Selected Manpower Statistics* (Washington, 15 April 1971), p. 19.

³ *Ibid.*; 85A Negro Strength 46-53 File (RefSec, Hist&Mus Div, HQMC).

⁴ *Washington Post*, 27Feb51 (Negro Marine Press Clippings 1950's File, RefSec, Hist&Mus Div, HQMC). HQMC).

⁵ LtGen Homer A. Litzberg, Jr. official biography (RefSec, Hist&Mus Div, HQMC).

⁶ Gen Oliver P. Smith interview by Oral History Unit, Historical Div, HQMC, dtd 9-11-22Jun69 (Oral History Collection, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁷ Race Data Reporting File 53-54 (RefSec, Hist&Mus-Div, HQMC).

⁸ 1535-110, Negroes-Asiatics, 1Jan49-30June50 File (Central Files, HQMC.)

⁹ Cpl Donald Woody casualty card (Casualty Files, Korean War, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹⁰ *Daily Northwestern*, 4Nov52 (Negro Marine Press Clippings 1950s File RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² PFC A C Clark Silver Star Citation (Manpower Department, HQMC).

¹³ *Ibid.*; PFC A C Clark Bronze Star Citation (Manpower Department, HQMC).

¹⁴ *Huff interview*.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ 85A Negro Personnel 1952 File (RefSec, Hist&Mus-Div, HQMC).

¹⁷ *G. H. Johnson interview*.

¹⁸ LtCol Frank E. Petersen, Jr. Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC): *Petersen interview*.

¹⁹ LtCol Kenneth H. Berthoud, Jr. Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

²⁰ LtCol Hurdle L. Maxwell official biography (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

²¹ *Huff interview*; HQMC, *Listing of Retired Marine Corps Personnel* (NAVMC 1005C) (Washington, 9May73).

²² *Huff interview*.

²³ Col Harlan C. Cooper official biography (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv), HQMC).

²⁴ *Manpower Statistics, op. cit.*, p. 25

²⁵ *J. E. Johnson interview*; LtGen Joseph C. Burger interview by Oral History Unit, Historical Division, HQMC, dtd 2Dec69 (Oral History Collection, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

²⁶ *J. E. Johnson interview*.

²⁷ 1954 *FOF*, p. 221B2.

²⁸ Burger interview, *op. cit.*

²⁹ *J. E. Johnson interview*.

³⁰ 1954 *FOF*, p. 163C1.

³¹ 1954 *FOF*, p. 38B1.

³² 1955 *FOF*, p. 369C2 and 1956, p. 380B1.

³³ 1957 *FOF*, 284D3 -285B1 and 1960, p. 124A1.

Chapter 7—The Vietnam Era

Unless otherwise noted the material in this section is derived from: Senior Member, Inquiry Team memo 2/3: JRL: rfc-3000 to Commanding General, Marine Corps Base, Camp Smedley D. Butler, dtd 4Oct71, Subj: Report of Racial Turbulence Inquiry (CMC Letter Files, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC); Negro Marines Civil Rights, Equal Opportunity Reports, and Race Relations Files (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv HQMC); *Huff interview*; *Petersen interview*; President's Committee on Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces, *Equality of Treatment and Opportunity for Negro Military Personnel Stationed within the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 13Jun63), hereafter *Gesell Report*.

¹ 1961 *FOF*, p. 379A-B3.

² Special Assistant for Minority Affairs comments on draft manuscript, "A Brief History of Blacks in the Marine Corps," n.d. (ca. Sep74).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Assistant Secretary of Defense memo to Undersecretaries of Army, Navy, and Air Force, dtd 7May62 (Negro Marines Civil Rights File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁶ AOIC memo for the record, dtd 18Jul62, Subj: Meeting with Civil Rights Commission Representative (Negro Marines Civil Rights File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁷ *Gesell Report*, p. 18

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁰ Mayor A. D. Guy ltr to MajGen Alpha L. Bowser, dtd 14Aug63 (LtGen James P. Berkeley papers, Manuscript Collection, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹¹ MajGen Alpha L. Bowser ltr to LtGen James P. Berkeley, dtd 23Aug63 (LtGen James P. Berkeley papers, Manuscript Collection, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹² DoD Directive 5120.36, dtd 26Jul63, Subj: Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces (Negro Marines Equal Opportunity Reports File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹³ 1967 *FOF*, p. 536A-E2

¹⁴ Director of Information ltr to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, dtd 26Dec63, Subj: Equal Opportunity Report (Negro Marines Equal Opportunity Reports File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹⁵ Secretary of the Navy ALNAV, dtd 9Jul64, Subj: DOD Policy Regarding NavDept Participation (Negro Marines—Equal Opportunity Reports File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹⁶ *Selections from the Report of the National Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Scholastic Book Services, 1969), p. 18.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁸ Equal Opportunity Branch, Summary of Significant Racial Incidents at Major Marine Corps Installations, August 1968—November 1971 (Negro Marines Race Relations File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

¹⁹ House Armed Services Committee, *Inquiry into the Disturbances at Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, N.C., on July 20, 1969* (Washington, 15Dec69), p. 5053, hereafter *HASC Inquiry*.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5054.

²¹ Copy in Negro Marines Race Relations File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC.

²² *HASC Inquiry*, p. 5051-5052.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 5053-5054.

²⁴ Summary of Racial Incidents, *op. cit.*, p. 2; 1970 *FOF*, p. 245G1.

²⁵ *HASC Inquiry*, p. 5051-5052.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5059.

²⁷ *Washington Post*, 16Aug69, p. A-5.

²⁸ USMC News Release No. 179-69, CMC Press Conference at the Pentagon, dtd 3Sep69 (Negro Marines Press Release File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

²⁹ Copy in Negro Marines Race Relations File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC.

³⁰ USMC News Release No. 179-69, *op. cit.*

³¹ Department of Defense, *Commanders Digest*, v. 6, no. 24 (13Sep69), pp. 1, 7.

³² Additional sources for this section include: HQMC Staff Report of Major Accomplishments, FY 72, Book 2 (G-1 Div), Tab 13, "CMC Advisory Committee for Minority Affairs," dtd 11Dec72, hereafter *Advisory Committee* and Tab 14, "Marine Corps Human Relations Institute," dtd 11Dec72, hereafter *Human Relations Institute*; Chief of Staff Project 23-67, dtd 10Feb69, hereafter *CofS Project 23-67* (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

³³ *CofS Project 23-67*; Department of Defense (Comptroller), Directorate for Information Operations, *Selected Manpower Statistics* (Washington, 15Apr71), p. 24.

³⁴ Director of Information memo to Director of Marine Corps History and Museums, dtd 19Jul74, Subj: "A Brief History of Blacks in the Marine Corps." (Comment File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

³⁵ "A Special Tribute to the Founders of the Montford Point Marine Association," in 1972 Program of the Montford Point Marine Association Annual Convention (Negro Marines, Publications File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

³⁶ Interview with Maj Edward L. Green in *Pittsburg Courier*, 7Oct72 (Negro Marines Press Clippings File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv HQMC).

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Head, Equal Opportunity Branch memo MPE-23-jj to Head, Histories Section, dtd 7Dec73, Subj: Composition of Black Officers and Enlisted Grades by Sex as of 30 September 1973 (Negro Marines Statistics File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv HQMC).

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *San Diego Union*, 18Sep71 (Negro Marines Press Clippings File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁴¹ Equal Opportunity Branch, Mission and Functions Statement (Negro Marines, Equal Opportunity Branch, 1969 File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv HQMC).

⁴² Quoted in *CofS Project 23-67*.

⁴³ Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) News Release No. 307-73, dtd 21Jun73 (Negro Marines News Release File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv HQMC).

⁴⁴ HQMC Staff Report of Major Accomplishments, 1970-1971, Book 22 (G-1 Div), Tab 17 (RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁴⁵ *Advisory Committee*.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ HQMC News Release No. KTW-230-71, General McCutcheon's CG's OP (Negro Marines News Release File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁴⁸ *A Brief History of the III Marine Amphibious Force* (Historical Division, September 1971); BGen Edwin H. Sim-

mons, "Marine Corps Operations in Vietnam, 1969-1972," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, v. 99, no. 843 (May 1973).

⁴⁹ Information provided by Manpower Planning, Programs, and Policy Branch, HQMC on 25 February 1974.

⁵⁰ LtCol Frank E. Petersen, Jr. Officer's Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

⁵¹ SgtMaj Edgar R. Huff Enlisted Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

⁵² Capt Moyers S. Shore, *The Battle for Khe Sanh* (Washington: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC, 1969), p. 145.

⁵³ SgtMaj Agrippa W. Smith Enlisted Case File (Manpower Department, HQMC).

⁵⁴ Individual Citations and Background Data (Medal of Honor file, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv HQMC).

⁵⁵ *Chicago Daily Defender*, 27Jul71, citing remarks

by BGen Robert D. Bohn, USMC in an article in the August 1971 issue of *Sepia* (Negro Marines Press Clippings File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv HQMC).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *G. H. Johnson interview.*

⁵⁸ *Huff interview.*

⁵⁹ Program of the Camp Lejeune Chapter, Montford Point Marine Association, Fourth Annual Testimonial Dinner Honoring The Honorable Howard N. Lee, Mayor, Chapel Hill, N.C. (Negro Marines, Publications File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁶⁰ Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) ltr to Mr. Grant T. Hallmon, dtd 10Oct73 (Negro Marines Interview Back-up File, RefSec, Hist&MusDiv, HQMC).

⁶¹ *Camp Lejeune Globe*, 25Apr74

APPENDIX B

**BLACK MARINE UNITS
OF THE FLEET MARINE FORCE, WORLD WAR II**

<i>Date of Activation</i>	<i>Unit Designation</i>	<i>Date of Deactivation</i>	<i>Where Deactivated</i>
18 Aug 1942	51st Composite Def Bn	31 Jan 1946	Montford Point
8 Mar 1943	1st Marine Depot Co	4 Jan 1946	Montford Point
23 Apr 1943	2d Marine Depot Co	4 Jan 1946	Montford Point
23 Apr 1943	3d Marine Depot Co	4 Jan 1946	Montford Point
1 June 1943	4th Marine Depot Co	31 Oct 1945	Guam
8 Jul 1943	5th Marine Depot Co	31 Oct 1943	New Caledonia
8 Jul 1943	6th Marine Depot Co	31 Aug 1943	New Caledonia
16 Aug 1943	7th Marine Depot Co	11 Dec 1945	Montford Point
16 Aug 1943	8th Marine Depot Co	10 Dec 1945	Montford Point
15 Sep 1943	9th Marine Depot Co	31 Dec 1945	Montford Point
15 Sep 1943	10th Marine Depot Co	22 Dec 1945	Montford Point
1 Oct 1943	1st Marine Ammunition Co	21 Feb 1946	Montford Point
7 Oct 1943	11th Marine Depot Co	4 Dec 1945	Saipan
7 Oct 1943	12th Marine Depot Co	11 Dec 1945	Montford Point
1 Nov 1943	13th Marine Depot Co	30 Nov 1945	Guam
1 Nov 1943	14th Marine Depot Co	30 Nov 1945	Guam
1 Nov 1943	2d Marine Ammunition Co	20 Jan 1946	Guam
1 Dec 1943	15th Marine Depot Co	30 Nov 1945	Allen Island
2 Dec 1943	16th Marine Depot Co	29 Jan 1946	Montford Point
2 Dec 1943	3d Marine Ammunition Co	25 Feb 1946	Montford Point
15 Dec 1943	52d Defense Bn	14 May 1946	Montford Point
1 Jan 1944	17th Marine Depot Co	16 Jan 1946	Montford Point
1 Jan 1944	18th Marine Depot Co	29 Jan 1946	Montford Point
1 Jan 1944	4th Marine Ammunition Co	8 Mar 1946	Guam
1 Feb 1944	19th Marine Depot Co	25 Feb 1946	Montford Point
1 Feb 1944	20th Marine Depot Co	21 Feb 1946	Montford Point
1 Feb 1944	5th Marine Ammunition Co	4 Jul 1946	Montford Point
1 Mar 1944	21st Marine Depot Co	2 Apr 1946	Montford Point
1 Mar 1944	22d Marine Depot Co	2 Apr 1946	Montford Point
1 Mar 1944	6th Ammunition Co	15 Dec 1945	Sasebo
1 Apr 1944	23d Marine Depot Co	5 Apr 1946	Montford Point
1 Apr 1944	24th Marine Depot Co	15 Nov 1945	Nagasaki
1 Apr 1944	7th Marine Ammunition Co	8 May 1946	Montford Point
1 May 1944	25th Marine Depot Co	2 May 1946	Montford Point
1 May 1944	26th Marine Depot Co	2 May 1946	Montford Point
1 May 1944	8th Marine Ammunition Co	30 Sep 1947	Guam
1 Jun 1944	27th Marine Depot Co	16 Apr 1946	Montford Point
1 Jun 1944	28th Marine Depot Co	2 May 1946	Montford Point
1 Jun 1944	9th Marine Ammunition Co	4 Jul 1946	Montford Point
1 Jul 1944	29th Marine Depot Co	8 May 1946	Montford Point
1 Jul 1944	30th Marine Depot Co	8 Apr 1946	Montford Point
1 Jul 1944	10th Marine Ammunition Co	6 May 1946	Montford Point
1 Aug 1944	31st Marine Depot Co	30 Nov 1945	Maui
1 Aug 1944	32d Marine Depot Co	8 May 1946	Montford Point
1 Aug 1944	11th Marine Ammunition Co	4 Jul 1946	Montford Point
1 Sep 1944	33d Marine Depot Co	31 Jan 1946	Guam
1 Sep 1944	34th Marine Depot Co	31 Jan 1946	Guam
1 Sep 1944	12th Marine Ammunition Co	5 Apr 1946	Montford Point
1 Oct 1944	35th Marine Depot Co	6 Jun 1946	Montford Point
1 Oct 1944	36th Marine Depot Co	17 Jun 1946	Montford Point
1 Nov 1944	37th Marine Depot Co	2 Apr 1946	Montford Point
1 Nov 1944	38th Marine Depot Co	2 Apr 1946	Montford Point

BLACKS IN THE MARINE CORPS

<i>Date of Activation</i>	<i>Unit Designation</i>	<i>Date of Deactivation</i>	<i>Where Deactivated</i>
1 Nov 1944	5th Marine Depot Co	21 Feb 1946	Montford Point
1 Dec 1944	6th Marine Depot Co	31 Dec 1945	Guam
1 Dec 1944	39th Marine Depot Co	10 Jun 1946	Guam
1 Dec 1944	40th Marine Depot Co	4 May 1946	Saipan
3 Mar 1945	41st Marine Depot Co	23 Mar 1946	Maui
14 Mar 1945	42d Marine Depot Co	15 Mar 1946	Sasebo
14 Mar 1945	43d Marine Depot Co	15 Mar 1946	Sasebo
18 Apr 1945	44th Marine Depot Co	8 Apr 1946	Montford Point
10 Aug 1945	45th Marine Depot Co	6 Jun 1946	Montford Point
1 Oct 1945	46th Marine Depot Co	15 Jul 1946	Montford Point
1 Oct 1945	47th Marine Depot Co	31 Oct 1946	Oahu
1 Oct 1945	48th Marine Depot Co	10 Jun 1946	Guam
1 Oct 1945	49th Marine Depot Co	30 Sep 1947	Guam

APPENDIX C

BLACK MARINE MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

The President of the United States in the name of the Congress takes pride in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JAMES ANDERSON, JR
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as a rifleman, Second Platoon, Company F, Second Battalion, Third Marines, Third Marine Division in Vietnam on 28 February 1967. Company F was advancing in dense jungle northwest of Cam Lo in an effort to extract a heavily besieged reconnaissance patrol. Private First Class Anderson's platoon was the lead element and had advanced only about 200 meters when they were brought under extremely intense enemy small arms and automatic weapons fire. Private First Class Anderson found himself tightly bunched together with the other members of the platoon only 20 meters from the enemy positions. As the fire fight continued several of the men were wounded by the deadly enemy assault. Suddenly, an enemy grenade landed in the midst of the Marines and rolled along side Private First Class Anderson's head. Unhesitatingly and with complete disregard for his own personal safety, he reached out, grasped the grenade, pulled it to his chest and curled around it as it went off. Although several Marines received shrapnel from the grenade, his body absorbed the major force of the explosion. In this singularly heroic act, Private First Class Anderson saved his comrades from serious injury and possible death. His personal heroism, extraordinary valor, and inspirational supreme self-sacrifice reflected great credit upon himself and the Marine Corps and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.



Private First Class James Anderson Jr., Medal of Honor Recipient (Posthumous) (USMC Photo A417058).

BLACKS IN THE MARINE CORPS

The President of the United States in the name of the Congress takes pride in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to

SERGEANT RODNEY M. DAVIS
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following
CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as the right guide of the Second Platoon, Company B, First Battalion, Fifth Marines, First Marine Division, in action against enemy forces in Quang Nam Province, Republic of Vietnam, on 6 September 1967. Elements of the Second Platoon were pinned down by a numerically superior force of attacking North Vietnamese Army Regulars. Remnants of the platoon were located in a trench line where Sergeant Davis was directing the fire of his men in an attempt to repel the enemy attack. Disregarding the enemy hand grenades and high volume of small arms and mortar fire, Sergeant Davis moved from man to man shouting words of encouragement to each of them while firing and throwing grenades at the onrushing enemy. When an enemy grenade landed in the trench in the midst of his men, Sergeant Davis, realizing the gravity of the situation, and in a final valiant act of complete self-sacrifice, instantly threw himself upon the grenade, absorbing with his own body the full and terrific force of the explosion. Through his extraordinary initiative and inspiring valor in the face of almost certain death, Sergeant Davis saved his comrades from injury and possible loss of life, enabled his platoon to hold its vital position, and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.



Sergeant Rodney M. Davis, Medal of Honor Recipient (Posthumous). (USMC Photo A417499).

BLACK MARINE MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

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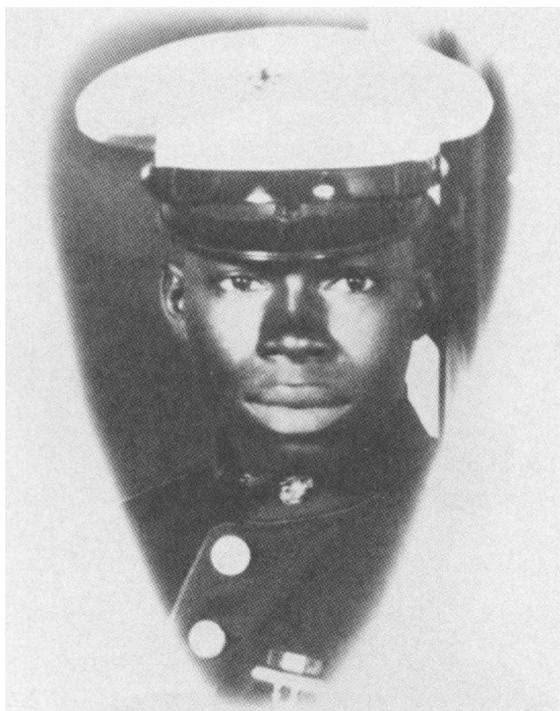
The President of the United States in the name of the Congress takes pride in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS RALPH H. JOHNSON
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Reconnaissance Scout with Company A, First Reconnaissance Battalion, First Marine Division in action against the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong Forces in the Republic of Vietnam. In the early morning hours of 5 March 1968, during Operation ROCK, Private First Class Johnson was a member of a fifteen-man reconnaissance patrol manning an observation post on Hill 146 overlooking the Quan Duc Duc Valley deep in enemy controlled territory. They were attacked by a platoon-size hostile force employing automatic weapons, satchel charges and hand grenades. Suddenly, a hand grenade landed in the three-man fighting hole occupied by Private Johnson and two fellow marines. Realizing the inherent danger to his two comrades, he shouted a warning and unhesitatingly hurled himself upon the explosive device. When the grenade exploded, Private Johnson absorbed the tremendous impact of the blast and was killed instantly. His prompt and heroic act saved the life of one marine at the cost of his own and undoubtedly prevented the enemy from penetrating his sector of the patrol's perimeter. Private Johnson's courage, inspiring valor and selfless devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.



Private First Class Ralph H. Johnson, Medal of Honor Recipient (Posthumous). (USMC Photo A700430).

BLACKS IN THE MARINE CORPS

The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pride in presenting the
MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS OSCAR P. AUSTIN
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty serving as an Assistant Machine Gunner with Company E, Second Battalion, Seventh Marines, First Marine Division in connection with operations against enemy forces in the Republic of Vietnam. During the early morning hours of 23 February 1969, Private First Class Austin's observation post was subjected to a fierce ground attack by a large North Vietnamese Army force supported by a heavy volume of hand grenades, satchel charges and small arms fire. Observing that one of his wounded companions had fallen unconscious in a position dangerously exposed to the hostile fire, Private First Class Austin unhesitatingly left the relative security of his fighting hole and, with complete disregard for his own safety, raced across the fire-swept terrain to assist the Marine to a covered location. As he neared the casualty, he observed an enemy grenade land nearby and, reacting instantly, leaped between the injured Marine and the lethal object, absorbing the effects of its detonation. As he ignored his painful injuries and turned to examine the wounded man, he saw a North Vietnamese Army soldier aiming a weapon at his unconscious companion. With full knowledge of the probable consequences and thinking only to protect the Marine, Private First Class Austin resolutely threw himself between the casualty and the hostile soldier and, in so doing, was mortally wounded. Private First Class Austin's indomitable courage, inspiring initiative and selfless devotion to duty upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.



*Private First Class Oscar P. Austin, Medal of Honor Recipient
(Posthumous) (USMC Photo A700428)*

BLACK MARINE MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

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The President of the United States in the name of the Congress takes pride in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS ROBERT H. JENKINS, JR.
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Machine Gunner with Company C, Third Reconnaissance Battalion, Third Marine Division in connection with operations against enemy forces in the Republic of Vietnam. Early on the morning of 5 March 1969, Private First Class Jenkins' twelve-man reconnaissance team was occupying a defensive position at Fire Support Base Argonne south of the Demilitarized Zone. Suddenly, the Marines were assaulted by a North Vietnamese Army platoon employing mortars, automatic weapons, and hand grenades. Reacting instantly, Private First Class Jenkins and another Marine quickly moved into a two-man fighting emplacement, and as they boldly delivered accurate machine gun fire against the enemy, a North Vietnamese soldier threw a hand grenade into the friendly emplacement. Fully realizing the inevitable results of his actions, Private First Class Jenkins quickly seized his comrade, and pushing the man to the ground, he leaped on top of the Marine to shield him from the explosion. Absorbing the full impact of the detonation, Private First Class Jenkins was seriously injured and subsequently succumbed to his wounds. His courage, inspiring valor and selfless devotion to duty saved a fellow Marine from serious injury or possible death and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.



Private First Class Robert H. Jenkins, Medal of Honor Recipient (Posthumous). (USMC Photo A700433).

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The device reproduced on the back cover is the oldest military insignia in continuous use in the United States. It first appeared, as shown here, on Marine Corps buttons adapted in 1804. With the stars changed to five points this device has continued on Marine Corps buttons to the present day.

